

CTE This Week
(October 4 – 8, 2004)

"Awaken people's curiosity. It is enough to open minds, do not overload them. Put there just a spark."
~Anatole France

Teaching Tip of the Week "Strategic Use of Student Presentations"

This tip is from Dr. Richard Lyons and can be found at <http://www.developfaculty.com/tips.html> along with other useful tips.

"Students master and retain learning quite effectively when they present their work to others. Anecdotally, we each can remember details within a school presentation made many years ago. Regardless of the discipline area, your students will likely benefit from making presentations also - that is, as long as sound practices are followed.

First, remember that the number one fear of adults is public speaking, so your students, whatever their age, are likely to need a great deal of reassurance to be successful. One key form of reassurance, which many professors overlook, is providing students with an adequate overview of the assignment. As a result, students commonly make unfocused, disjointed presentations which contribute to their feelings of inadequacy. A series of such presentations makes managing classroom time problematic, leading to some students not having enough time to make their presentations. Well in advance therefore, students should be provided, in writing, the goals and objectives of the presentation, as well as a detailed rubric, which will be used to guide evaluation. If your course has an especially large enrollment and/or if building teamwork is an especially desirable goal, you might consider having students make presentations in a group setting, e.g. as a member of a forum or panel discussion. This also relieves much of the anxiety, because presenting to a small group is less frightening than presenting to a large group, particularly if this subset of the class has been working together on various projects through the semester. If yours is an introductory course and/or students voice considerable anxiety, provide coaching in techniques of presenting effectively and consistently model excellent presentation skills for them, being explicit about what you're modeling. Techniques of gaining viewers' attention, effectively utilizing visual aids and powerfully concluding a presentation should be emphasized. At the time the assignment is explained, have a student with a proven track record in another professor's class demonstrate effective presentation skills. Or, show and explain a video of an excellent presentation. A final, but far less desirable option is for the professor to deliver a presentation him- or herself, emphasizing in advance the key points which students should observe. Some students would likely have difficulty objectively separating such a presentation from regular lecture or demonstration, while others might view such a presentation as the model and work so hard to duplicate it that they appear unnatural."

Resources at CTE - Come by and take a look at some of the articles and books in our library. If you would like a copy of any of the articles abstracted below, contact the CTE (cte@tcu.edu). You might be interested in:

- **Integrating Modern Times Through Student Team Presentations: A Case Study on Interdisciplinary Team Teaching and Learning** by Jane H. Oitzinger and Daniel C. Kallgren (University of Wisconsin) *This case study of a team-taught learning community that integrates American history and literature focuses on student team presentations. We argue for the need to train students to learn actively, and we describe strategies for teaching students how to prepare for and present interdisciplinary team presentations. One finding is that training students for active learning does not detract from the content, but rather deepens and enriches it; another finding is that students are more likely to integrate disciplines successfully if faculty are skillful at integrating disciplines.*
- **Teaching Methods and Assessment Techniques for the Undergraduate Introductory Finance Course: A National Survey** by Kent T. Saunders (Anderson University, Indiana). *This paper reports the results of a national survey of corporate*

- finance faculty teaching methods and assessment techniques. Of the 852 surveys sent out, 170 were returned. The survey results indicate that lectures and instructor-led problem solving are the dominant teaching methods. Textbook reading and individual homework are the primary outside-class assignments. Students' overall grades are determined almost entirely by individual in-class exams. Most finance faculty use computers in their teaching. Approximately half of finance faculty use group work and writing assignments, but fewer than half use student presentations in their courses.*
- **Student Presentations of the Life and Work of Prominent Social Psychologists** by Traci Al Giuliano (Southwestern University). *In this article, the author describes a social psychology class assignment in which groups of student deliver a 15 - 20 minute presentation on the life and work of a prominent social psychologist. This assignment is designed to foster a richer understanding of, and better memory for, concepts, theories, and experiments in social psychology. Students read primary literature in social psychology, become more familiar with the shapers of the field, and gain insight into the development and progress of research ideas and programs. Students responded favorably to this assignment and found value both in listening to the other presentations as well as working on their own presentations.*

Streaming Videos from STARLINK

Available from STARLINK this week is a new streaming video program. You can access this 24/7 from the Starlink webpage <http://www.starlinktraining.org/> under the "Members Only" section using Real Player (a free download at <http://www.real.com>). They are best viewed with a high-speed Internet connection.

"Teaching for Strategic Learning" is the October streaming video. PASSWORD: teach321 (case sensitive). RUNNING TIME: 90 min. This video features two of the nation's leading experts on classroom teaching/learning and student motivation: Dr. Wilbert McKeachie & Dr. Claire Ellen Weinstein. Download the participant packet at <http://www.starlinktraining.org/packets2004/packet1113.pdf> . You can access this from your TCU office.

Upcoming Events at CTE - Mark Your Calendars!

- **Writing Letters of Recommendation** - Presented by the TCU Career Services Center and the Center For Teaching Excellence, this one-hour workshop is designed to support faculty who are interested in writing letters of recommendation. A discussion of legal issues (outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers) and samples of letters will be a part of this workshop. In addition, faculty will be able to see a short demonstration of *Interfolio*, a system is endorsed by the Chronicle of Higher Education and used by students to maintain an online portfolio. **Thursday, October 7th from 3:00 - 4:00** in the CTE. Go to <http://www.cte.tcu.edu/workshopsevents/index.htm#lettersofrecommendation> to register!
- **Conversation on Teaching: Ten Ways to Find Out What They Don't Know** - Finding out at the end of your course that students have misunderstood or never learned a key concept is one of the most frustrating experiences an educator can have. This conversation on teaching will present 10 classroom assessment techniques (CATs) that you can use any time during the semester to quickly determine what students know and what they don't know. You will leave with a full inventory of these (and other) CATs. Bring your own lunch and enjoy collegial discussions! **Friday, October 15 in the CTE (501 SWR) from 12:00 - 1:00**. Go to <http://www.cte.tcu.edu/workshopsevents/index.htm#cottenways> to register.
- **Survey Tools Demo** - Ever desire to send out a survey mid semester to your students for feedback on new teaching styles? The Survey Manager provides an easy way for you to administer online evaluations and to review feedback from your users/students. You can use the Survey Manager to create new surveys, search for and edit existing surveys, deliver surveys, and view response rates for surveys. You can also set start and end dates for each survey, as well as define the types of questions your respondents will be

asked to respond to. In short, the Survey Manager can help you quickly and easily get and review feedback from your users. **Wednesday, October 20 from 3:00 - 4:00.** Go to <http://www.cte.tcu.edu/workshopsevents/index.htm#SurveyTools> to register.