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Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence

Education For Peace Building By Laurie Shepherd Johnson

My Fulbright project, undertaken in conjunction with a teaching leave from the CTSE, sought to develop training programs in conflict transformation and interculturalism for teachers and counselors in Cyprus. My work involved targeted efforts in the Turkish Muslim community as well as initiatives in the Greek Orthodox community. Rather than cursorily conducting individual training, my goal was to establish training frameworks that could be institutionalized in educational and community-based systems.

In this issue

In states divided by violent conflict, each side clings to the perception of the other side as the enemy by tirelessly venerating what political psychologist Vamik Volkan would call its own "chosen traumas" and "chosen glories." Over time, this thinking becomes doctrinaire and serves to shape the group's collective identity. The longer this psychological stance of perceived injustice and righteousness in relation to "the other" continues, the harder it becomes to achieve peace through diplomatic means. For sustainable peace to be built in such regions, changes must be made in the institutions that propagate divisive ideology so that people on both sides can embrace a reframed understanding of "the other."

While one might expect a nation's schools to contribute to the goals of social cohesion, the reality is that the educational systems in post-conflict societies are often complicit in perpetuating conflict. Indeed, when I first began my research on Cyprus, I found that schools on both sides of this divided island were not only actively reinforcing societal divisions but also decrying the notion of peace education as an anathema. In mid-2004, however, Cyprus was accepted into the EU and, almost immediately, the mandate came down to align its institutions, including its education system, with the EU perspective – a perspective that increasingly was focusing on interculturalism, human rights, citizenship and peace education. Government officials, policy makers, and educational leaders were expected to adopt these attitudes. It was this political change that opened the door for me to pursue my Fulbright project in Cyprus.

To provide some background here, the island of Cyprus has been a divided society ever since violent hostilities between its Greek and Turkish communities led to the assignment of U.N.

A Teaching Leave Project

Laurie Shepherd Johnson, a professor of counseling and Fullbright Scholar, devoted a recent teaching leave to establishing peace-building programs in schools and community institutions in Cyprus, an island divided by violent conflict between Greek and Turkish communities.

peacekeepers on the island in 1964. After Greek forces attempted a coup aimed at unifying Cyprus with Greece, Turkey responded with military action into the northern part of the island (this event is referred to as "the Turkish invasion" by Greek Cypriots and as "the peace operation of 1974" by Turkish Cypriots). In July 1974 the island was formally divided. A "green line" cuts across the center of the capital city of Nicosia and extends 180m across the island, dividing Greek Cypriots (GC) who live in the southern part from the Turkish Cypriots (TC) who live in the northern third of the island. The U.N.-patrolled buffer zone that separates the two communities at the "green line" is fittingly referred to as "the Dead Zone" in Cyprus. As a result of this division, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have had no meaningful contact with each other for more than three decades.

Hofstra at Home and Abroad:
Teaching Journalism in Moldova By Steven R. Knowlton

It was past 5 o'clock on Friday afternoon, the end of a long teaching day that had begun at 8 a.m. and the end of a week that seemed even longer. The seven hours of scheduled classes had ended at 3 p.m., but hardly anyone stirred when official class time ended and optional lab hours began.

It was early in the term at the Chisinau School of Advanced Journalism, the first independent journalism school in the nation's history, and the course was basic news writing. The topic at hand was writing lead paragraphs, which looks simple enough to outsiders, but which journalism teachers the world over know to be about the hardest thing to teach.

After you have written a few hundred of them, patterns emerge and reporters who have learned to trust their fingers can write leads as fast as they can type. But for rookies, crafting a good lead can be excruciating, even if you haven't been in class for 45 hours or so this week, even if you haven't been grappling with a babel of English, Russian and Romanian.

The lab was closing, the instructors were exhausted and trying to shoo out the stragglers, when one student, Irina Didencu, asked for some lead writing exercises to work on over the weekend. "This is hard for me," she said. "I need to put in more time to learn how to do this."

We couldn't stay longer because the school's computer lab isn't really either the school's or a computer lab. It is an Internet café full of shoot 'em up games that the school, using mostly Dutch money, has rented by the hour from the café owner, who has, in turn, leased the upstairs space from Chisinau's new Jewish center, built for the people of Moldova and Belarus, by UJA in Toronto.

As everyone here says eventually, usually with one degree of irony or another: Welcome to Moldova.

Sometimes, "Welcome to Moldova" accompanies a shrug of the shoulders, as when the bureaucracy simply doesn't work, when the regulations from the Ministry of Filling Out Forms clash with the policies of the Department for Filing Useless Paperwork. Sometimes you hear it when you encounter a "No photographs allowed" sign in a perfectly innocent public park. And sometimes you hear it when a native Moldovan explains that photographs are, in fact, allowed as soon as you slip the guard a couple of dollars. If it always costs money to take pictures in the park, and if everyone knows this, why not have a picture-taking fee? Or a park entrance fee that includes the taking of photographs? Shrug. Welcome to Moldova.

All this is true enough – the bureaucracy has hardly become a model of clean efficiency since the Soviets left in 1991. The economy is a mess, with the official standard of living having fallen a staggering 90 percent in 15 years. The combination means that corruption at all levels is rife, and in a country of four million people, half a million people or more are working abroad, many illegally, sending remittances back home. Human trafficking is a huge industry, and drugs and weapons pour through the eastern border. More to my particular point, the state-owned news outlets are dreadful by Western standards, and such independent press as exists is so financially starved it can hardly function.

For all that, partly because of all that, on the first Monday in September, 20 journalists and would-be journalists put their lives on hold for a year to go back to school to take on the job of building an independent press system, which the school's mission statement argues is utterly essential to the creation of an honest democracy.
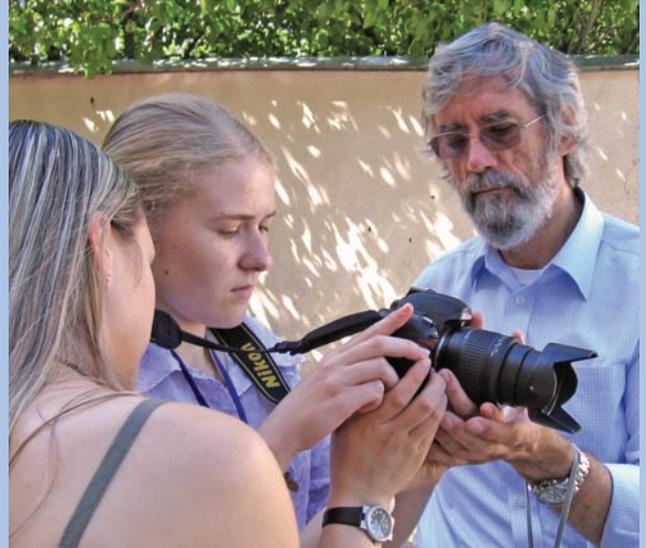
Steven Knowlton teaches fledgling reporters at the Chisinau School of Advanced Journalism in Moldova. Knowlton, a journalism professor, is a Knight International Jornalism Fellow working to help the former Soviet country develop an independent press system.

As a Knight International Journalism Fellow on a six-month leave from Hofstra, I was here for the launch. Plans for the school have been several years in the making, of course, but when I arrived with my wife and fellow Fellow, Karen Freeman, who is on leave from *The New York Times*, we faced, in spades, all the tasks that any new academic program encounters. There were syllabuses to write, a curriculum to organize, a faculty of adjuncts to train, the whole range of school policies to write, and all the rest. And of course, we had to select and admit the students. We had 10 weeks to do it with virtually no infrastructure and virtually no occasions in which everyone in the room spoke the same language.

Less than 96 hours before school was to open, we had not yet found the computer lab. (Who would think to look for an Internet café upstairs in a Hillel center?) It was another 24 hours after that before Corina Cepoi, the school's founder and indefatigable champion, secured, from the British Embassy here, the last of the scholarships-plus-stipends for the students. As a good type-A New Yorker, I was in a lather. Relax, everyone told me. You're in Moldova. And so, we opened. And what an inaugural class!

I've been teaching for two decades and have had many wonderful students, many of whom I have stayed in touch with years after they leave my classes. But I've never encountered a group of students who approach the tasks ahead of them with such grit and determination and yet with such good will.

This is a tough country, deeply mired in poverty, corruption and an enervating bureaucratic mentality. Moldovans' stories will break your heart at every turn. At least two of my students – young women of 23 or 24 – are raising not only themselves but younger siblings as well. Their fathers are nowhere to be found and their mothers have been working illegally in Italy for years because there were no jobs to be found in Moldova.

Yet they are in class every day at 8 a.m. sharp, never miss an assignment, never ask for a break and are unfailingly cheerful and good-humored. All 20 students, especially the native Russian speakers, will argue about absolutely everything and take nothing on faith, certainly not from aliens who have just landed from Planet America. Yet they are utterly committed to squeezing every drop of learning they can from their year in school and then to dragging their country into a modern, democratic, European world.

So, when I hear, "Welcome to Moldova," I answer, "Multumesc" – Thanks. "It is an honor to be here."

Steven Knowlton is a professor of journalism and associate director of the CTSE.

Learning Out Loud By Cindy Rosenthal

Photo credit: Carol Rosegg

Cindy Rosenthal

Some years ago I had the opportunity to work with Peggy O'Brien, a terrific educator affiliated with the Folger Shakespeare Library and Theatre in Washington, D.C. O'Brien believes that the only way you can truly bring Shakespeare alive in the classroom is by putting the words of his characters in students' mouths – in other words, by getting every single student, actor or not, to speak the text out loud, in connection with their peers, in an active way.

I often teach Shakespeare, and I heartily agree with O'Brien. What I want to argue here, as I take off my drama professor hat for a moment and don my cap as Hofstra's public speaking consultant, is that whatever your discipline, we can all benefit from putting Peggy O'Brien's theory into practice in our classrooms. I've done it and I can say (out loud, with conviction) that the texts we assign in humanities, social science, and even natural science courses – "non-dramatic" texts, such as essays, articles, letters, government or legal documents, poetry, memoirs – can be more fully understood and analyzed by our students if they are VOICED.

So have your students read out loud in class. Go around the room. Let each and every student take part.

We tend to believe that written texts impart a particular point of view, but, in fact, almost all texts reveal shifting and multiple points of view when analyzed. When our students read texts aloud, actively listen to the reading, and analyze it afterward, the results can be illuminating and rewarding. A few years ago I co-taught an SUS core course with John Teehan of Religious Studies and James Levy in History. We assigned our students Martin Luther King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail." We had approximately 35 freshmen; none were trained or particularly skilled as actors or orators. The class was configured in four rows, and we moved the reading sentence-by-sentence across the rows, each student reading aloud from the section of the letter that begins "Why direct action?" We allowed no pauses between readers. The piece has a natural build, and most students responded with their voices rising in energy and volume. In the out-loud reading it became clear that even this impassioned manifesto was dialogic; there were multiple perspectives, attitudes, and agendas in the document, rhetorical strategies deployed by King, which students could now more easily mark and analyze.

This semester, in a course I'm co-teaching with Ilana Abramovitch on Brooklyn history and culture, we recently read Vladimir Mayakovsky's "Brooklyn Bridge" out loud with a group of non-performers with similarly successful results. We built a chorus, a community of voices, in our out-loud reading of the poem – and students who had not as yet been active, vocal participants spoke up in our discussion afterward about the disparate voices, imagery and rhythms in this epic work. A different kind of connection was made when they put the "words in their mouths," as O'Brien says. Certainly, it's never a bad idea to shake up classroom dynamics. Take a break from being "The Voice" at the head of the classroom. Let your students – all of them – really *do* the reading next time.

Cindy Rosenthal is associate professor of drama and dance, School for University Studies fellow, and public speaking consultant for the CTSE.

Tech Tools Break Down Class Walls By Judith Tabron

Finance Professor Andrew Spieler has created a "learning object" that teaches business students how to use a financial calculator. The learning object combines audio, video, PowerPoint slides and searchable text.

Many Hofstra faculty are taking advantage of technology to expand the walls of their classrooms. By using technology tools that let students learn anytime and anywhere, these faculty have freed up class time for discussion and explanation. Students come to class more prepared to tackle the topic of the day, and can also review key material at their leisure as many times as they like. Class time can then be devoted to the type of student-instructor interaction for which Hofstra students select this university.

Here's a small sample of the ways your colleagues are putting technology to work:

Video quotes. Richard Cavello from Computer Science has just finished working with Faculty Computing Services (FCS) to digitize "video quotes" that he uses in his class. To highlight the meaning of technology in society, Professor Cavello uses a number of small pieces of video from television and film. Rather than juggling DVDs or VHS cassettes, he can store key selections digitally and retrieve them in class in seconds. He can also put links to the video clips in his Blackboard course so that students can review them before they come to class.

Podcasting. Nancy Kaplan in Audio/Video/Film is one of our trailblazing podcasters. Any faculty member can, at any time, make an MP3 sound file and save it in a Blackboard course where students can download and listen to it. But in true podcasting, a faculty member produces periodic sound or video files on a regular basis, and students subscribe to the "feed," always automatically receiving the most recent file. Soon, with help from FCS, Professor Kaplan will record a series of audio tours of complex pieces of equipment that students can review on their own time. By subscribing to the class podcast, students will always have the latest information.

Pre-quizzes. Steve Lawrence in Physics uses Blackboard to give his students pre-class quizzes on the homework. The Blackboard upgrade completed in summer '06 gives faculty new quiz and question types. There are many more types of questions than just multiple choice, and quizzes can be adaptive, selecting questions to present to students based on their performance on previous questions.

Professor Lawrence monitors how well his students keep up with and understand their homework with regular, required pre-class quizzes in Blackboard, so he knows how to focus his lectures before he even arrives in class, based on what students are absorbing and understanding.

Learning objects. A learning object is a small multimedia instructional module (containing text, graphics, animation, audio or video) that can be used many times in different learning contexts. Andrew Spieler in the Finance Department has just completed a learning object showing students how to use a financial calculator. Students who need to use a financial calculator – which includes most students in the Zarb School of Business – can review the explanation over and over again whenever they please. A draft of this learning object is available at http://people.hofstra.edu/faculty/andrew_c_spieler/calculator. Learning objects can be as simple as pure audio, audio with video, or, as in this instance, audio with video, PowerPoint slides, and searchable text. Learning objects usually try to convey core concepts that students will need throughout a course or throughout an entire degree program.

Technology Boot Camp. Ethna Lay in the English Department participated in the University's first Catalyst Boot Camp, a weeklong intensive discussion of instructional technologies and their pedagogical uses. Professor Lay has gone from being rather unsure about how to use computers in teaching to using them at every level, from freshman to graduate-level courses. And she will be presenting a paper on using social software in the medieval studies classroom at the 42nd International Congress of Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, Michigan (May 2007), the largest medieval studies conference in the country.

Professor Lay now utilizes technology in all of her classes. She even has students complete their in-class writing assignments on their own laptops and turn them in via the wireless network right there in the classroom, using Blackboard to collect them!

The first Boot Camp involved faculty from HCLAS; a second Boot Camp is scheduled in January for faculty in the School of Communication.

To learn more about what these and other Hofstra professors are doing in the classroom with Hofstra's technology resources, visit our gallery of innovators at http://www.hofstra.edu/fcs/FCS_gallery.cfm or visit the Faculty Computing Services Support Center, 215 McEwen, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can also reach FCS by phone at (516) 463-6894 or via e-mail at fcshelp@hofstra.edu.

Judith Tabron is director of Faculty Computing Services.

Students in English Professor Ethna Lay's class complete their in-class writing assignments on their laptops and turn them in via the wireless network.

Advice on Agents, Contracts and Other Publishing Hurdles

The CTSE has long offered an editing service and manuscript review program to all faculty. Now, a new service is available for those trying to publish. Stanislao G. Pugliese, a history professor and CTSE member, is available as a source of informal advice to junior faculty trying to tackle the publishing world.

A note from Professor Pugliese:

Junior faculty no doubt spend an extraordinary amount of time and emotional capital pondering the ominous "publish or perish" dictum of our profession. They have been working with this sword dangling over their heads from the first day they step onto the campus and into their classrooms. As senior faculty, we share the responsibility of getting the fine scholarship of our junior colleagues into print.

Scholars and academics now work in a publishing universe vastly different from that of our mentors. Almost gone are the gentlemen editors and society women from New York's "finest" families who devoted themselves to literature, history, poetry and the "life of the mind" without worrying too much about a publishing house's bottom line. Indeed, in the days of yore, it was often considered a badge of honor to lose money! Those folks prided themselves on being beyond spreadsheets, P&L (profit and loss) statements, and market-

Stanislao G. Pugliese

ing stratagems. No more. Even university presses, always a source of prestige but usually in the red, have been told to at least "break even." The result: a publishing environment where it is increasingly difficult for junior faculty to get that critical first monograph published.

As a series editor for a major academic publisher, I am happy to meet with junior faculty who have questions regarding contacting houses and editors, putting together proposals, contracts, agents and, when the work is finally published, publicity. You can reach me at (516) 463-5611 or stanislao.pugliese@hofstra.edu.

Stanislao G. Pugliese, Ph.D. (Hofstra Class of 1987) is professor of history and the author, editor or translator of a dozen books on Italian and Italian-American studies. He is a former consulting editor with Routledge and is now series editor with Palgrave Macmillan.

From the Director
Writing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement

Dear Colleagues,

It is becoming increasingly common for department personnel committees, department chairs, grants organizations, and others to ask faculty members for a written statement about their philosophy of teaching. Such statements generally describe a faculty member's overall ideas about teaching and learning, methods and strategies used in the classroom, and reasons behind those strategies. Often, people compelled to write these statements as part of a tenure or promotion file discover that the process of putting their teaching philosophy into words ends up helping them in the classroom. The process can focus attention on teaching behaviors that are being taken for granted but may no longer be useful or relevant.

Many online resources are available to help faculty create a personal philosophy of teaching and refine statements to reflect a distinctive style. Ohio State University has a Web site at ftad.osu.edu/portfolio/philosophy/Philosophy.html that provides general formatting suggestions, sample statements and additional references. Iowa State University's Web site at celt.iastate.edu/teaching/philosophy.html addresses the four primary questions a statement should raise and answer: What are your objectives as a teacher? What methods do you use to achieve those objectives? How do you measure your effectiveness given the objectives and methods you have outlined? Why do you do what you do? The description of the last section suggests that it is the place to be "at least a bit grand," discussing the "wonderful rewards of teaching" or making "a difference in the lives of your students." The Washington University Web site at artsci.wustl.edu/~teachcen/WUTC/TA/teach_phil.html suggests additional topics that could be included in the statement.

The CTSE offers a variety of services to enhance teaching. They are listed on the CTSE web site. CTSE members are also available to read and make suggestions about philosophy of teaching statements.

Best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a healthy, happy and peaceful new year.

Susan

Susan Lorde Martin is the director of the CTSE and the Cypres Family Distinguished Professor of Legal Studies in Business.

Alternatives to Lecture
Thinking for Themselves – With Plenty to Think About By Bruce Torff

Many professors, in their student days, had the misfortune of sitting through classes that were passive, dull experiences. And some had classes that kept them busy but were unstructured to the point of chaos. How to find the middle ground?

Consider three approaches to teaching. They vary in terms of how much information the professor provides and what kind of learning processes students engage in.

The first is **repeat the information given (RIG)**. In this approach, students are given gobs of information, usually from lectures and readings. A great deal of "traditional" university teaching can be categorized as RIG.

RIG teaching is nothing if not efficient. A very large amount of information can be directed to students, which seems advantageous when there is a lot of material to cover. And there's no doubt about the accuracy of what students are exposed to, since the professor has complete control over the information flow.

Needless to say, students often find the RIG approach tedious – and frequently overwhelming, like drinking from a fire hose. Unsurprisingly, a great deal of research indicates that they don't remember much, either.

A different kind of teaching could be called **without information given (WIG).** In this comparatively left-edge approach, professors provide very little information, leaving students to figure out for themselves what they ought to know. This kind of teaching is comparatively rare, but not unheard of. For example, students may be asked to develop an argument as to why the New Deal was a visionary step forward or a colossal blunder. But they are given virtually no information to go on to get this task started, so they are required to think for themselves as to how to acquire the needed information and formulate an argument.

WIG teaching can result in powerful learning experiences for students, who enjoy the thrill of discovery if all goes well. And they tend to remember more of what they discovered. But the WIG approach is supremely inefficient, and frequently chaotic, and students often flounder in such an unstructured environment. They may commit to memory all manner of misinformation and misconception, or engage in uniformed discourse (read: snow jobs). These are the sorts of outcomes that professors dread.

Fortunately, there is a middle ground. Let's call it **BIG**, for **beyond the information given.** That's the title of a landmark book published in 1957 by psychologist Jerome Bruner. In BIG teaching, students have some information to go on, but they have to do more than repeat it. They must analyze, synthesize or apply the information. The BIG approach combines the intellectual richness of RIG with the learning-by-discovery of WIG.

Suppose that a psychology professor wants students to understand how four different theories account for language development. For each theory, the professor prepares an information packet that summarizes the theory and its key research findings.

Each student is assigned to one of the theories, given the appropriate information packet, and presented with an assignment sheet with questions. To answer the questions, students have to read the information packet and use

Bruce Torff

their heads. For example, one question might be: How would the theory account for the linguistic development of children who have no contact with any kind of language as they grow up? (An Egyptian Pharaoh once tried this, in more ethically challenged times.) Such questions function as "thought experiments" that require students to both delve deeply into the theory and think critically about it.

Once students have had time to read and think (and get help from the professor as needed), the class is called together and each theory is discussed in turn. Students are asked to give their answers to the questions, react to their peers' answers, and pose more questions, as the professor moderates the discussion and keeps things on track. After the students have had their say, the professor may opt to give a two- to three-minute mini-lecture about each theory, in case key points were left unspoken.

BIG lessons such as this require students to be active in their learning and to think critically about the subject at hand, but to do so in a content-rich environment.

In university teaching, as in so many other things, the prudent course is often the moderate one.

Bruce Torff is an associate professor of curriculum and teaching in the School of Education and Allied Human Services and a member of the CTSE.

Having a Word www. HELP ME WRITE.com By Carol Porr

In the last issue of the *Center for Teaching Excellence Newsletter,* I discussed several of the reference books about grammar, usage, and style that could be helpful to anyone interested in improving writing skills. Since I am at heart a bibliophile, I prefer the look, the feel, and the smell of a book. In acknowledging, however, that there are some among us who prefer to "search the Internet" for information, I made a perfunctory reference in that issue to one grammar Web site for anyone who might be interested. Well, the editor of the *CTSE Newsletter* was interested. She's asked me to cover other Web sites devoted to grammar in this issue (and I thought I'd gotten away with giving modern technology short shrift!). Thankfully, I had my colleague and mentor, Dr. Scott Harshbarger, to turn to; and he generously offered guidance. So, while I can't take complete credit for discovering all of them, here is my modest effort at outlining some grammar Web sites:

Style and Usage
The King's English, 2nd edition
http://www.bartleby.com/116/
H.W. Fowler is the legendary author of *Modern English Usage,* one of the most celebrated reference works. Here it is online.

The American Heritage Book of English Usage
http://www.bartleby.com/64
The practical and authoritative guide to contemporary American English. It covers grammar, style, diction, word formation, etc.

The Elements of Style
http://www.bartleby.com/141/index
I covered this classic book in the last article. It's easily accessible on this helpful Web site.

Grammar and Writing
Purdue University's Online Writing Lab
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/
Even though I mentioned Owl in the last issue, I think it bears repeating. This Web site contains a link to grammar and mechanics as well as research and citation, including APA and MLA formatting. Under "Grammar and Mechanics" there's an alphabetized list of grammatical issues from parts of speech to punctuation and use of clauses. There's also a link to **English as a Second Language** (ESL) as well as **Writing for the Social Sciences.**

Grammar Guide
http://www.grammarstation.com
This site offers guidance in the use of specific grammatical terms. It includes a Grammar Glossary, where a user can look up a particular grammatical problem and receive instruction.

Interactive Web Sites
Daily Grammar
http://www.gailydrammar.com
Daily Grammar offers a free service that sends you e-mail messages with a grammar lesson five days a week and a quiz on the sixth day.

Grammar Bytes!
http://chompchomp.com
This interactive grammar Web site, billed as "grammar instruction with *attitude*," includes detailed definitions of grammatical terms and contains interactive exercises.

Guide to Grammar and Writing
http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar
This guide to all aspects of the writing process includes a detailed section on grammar, as well as exercises and quizzes, so you can test your skills.

Sentence Diagra
Sentence Diagrams
http://www.geocities.com/gene_moutoux/basicdiagrams1-5
This site has become a favorite of mine, but it's not for "grammarphobes"! Diagramming sentences is great way to understand the anatomy of a sentence. It begins with diagrams of simple sentences and progresses on to moderately long and complex sentences. All this is accompanied by explanations for beginners as well as those experienced at diagramming. There's a link on this Web site that offers a detailed diagram of a 100-word sentence!

Carol Porr

Solving Grammatical Errors
Serendipity: Common Errors
http://www.serendipity.li/errors.html
As the authors of this Web site explain, "Errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation are rightly called errors because they obscure meaning ... decrease clarity and interfere with communication." This interesting Web site offers an examination of common errors that are becoming generally accepted as correct. The discussion includes the use of that and which, the use of i.e. vs. e.g., affect vs. effect, and many more.

Grammar and Usage for the Non-Expert
http://www.grammartips.homestead.com/index.html
This Web site contains interesting, non-technical articles on problems of grammar and usage that even good writers sometimes have difficulty with.

Language in Gen
The Web of Language
http://webtools.uiuc.edu/blog/view?blogId=25
Here's a great Web site with a number of topics devoted to language issues from usage to language politics. Titles range from "Google rules that google isn't a word" to "Text messages improve spelling." My favorite is "Grammar: Good for your health?"

Please keep in mind that these links are subject to change. While they are all current at this time, some of them could be changed, updated, or even eliminated. (That's why I prefer my books!)

If podcasts are your thing, Scott Harshbarger has generously informed me that there's a grammar podcast called "Grammar Girl's Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing." To date, there are 24 different episodes running anywhere from two to seven minutes, and they can be accessed through iTunes.com.

I'd love to hear from anyone who discovers a Web site that is particularly helpful. You can e-mail me at Carol.J.Porr@hofstra.edu, and I'll be happy to pass the information along.

Carol Porr is an adjunct instructor of English and assistant director of the English Composition Program. She is also the English editing consultant to the CTSE.

Design Is Key in Statistical Analysis By Michael J. Barnes

Statistics are powerful tools that allow one to describe data, make predictions, and make decisions. But what statistics you can glean from a body of data depends intricately on how your research was designed in the first place.

Michael J. Barnes

The Process of Investigation

Let's review how research generally proceeds. Prior to collecting data, the investigator scours previous research in his or her area of interest. Depending on what turns up, the investigator may proceed in one of several ways. The researcher may discover that a particular theory has already been formulated relative to the research. If so, hypotheses (i.e., predictions or "educated guesses") may be generated from this theory. These hypotheses, generated by the investigator, will then guide the research. If no such theory exists or if previous research has been equivocal, or unclear, the researcher creates questions, rather than predictions, in his or her area of interest.

Theories are general formal statements that connect concepts within a certain area of study. For example, a theory may state that behavior is related to feelings. To most of us, this seems a rather elementary notion or simply a matter of "common sense." All of us seem to "do" according to the way we "feel." However, without data to support this theory, one cannot make definitive statements regarding this topic … no matter how simplistic or realistic it may appear on the surface. To do so would be "unscientific."

Two Types of Theories: Cause and Effect vs. Relational

The creation of theory is an attempt to put order into relationships among concepts. For instance, one theory might be that feelings precede behavior. In effect, the behavior is "dependent upon" the feeling that one possesses. In this case a "cause-and-effect" relationship exists between "feelings" and "behavior," such that "feelings" cause "behavior."

However, some theories are not able to determine which one of the constructs comes first (the antecedent) and which comes next (the resultant). In this case, the theory can only indicate that there is a relationship between the constructs.

To a person outside of the scientific realm, this distinction may seem trivial. But nothing could be further from the truth. If the investigation is of a cause-and-effect nature, then the investigator is conducting an **experiment.** If, on the other hand, the investigator is primarily interested in examining the relationship between the constructs or variables, the study is of a **non-experimental** nature. This distinction has a great bearing on the statistical analysis that will be conducted.

Many of the statistical analyses that are used for experiments can be extended to non-experiments. The converse is not true. For example, analyses like the *t*-tests for both independent and dependent samples, analysis of variance (both fixed effects and random effects models), among other statistical techniques, can be used for both experiments and non-experiments. On the other hand, correlation and regression analyses are reserved for non-experiments only.

Correlation and Regression Analysis for Non-Experimental Designs

As mentioned above, the aim of non-experimental designs is to investigate and determine the relationship between two or more variables. Correlation and regression analyses provide just the vehicle to do so. **Correlation** analyses allow one to directly determine the **direction** and **strength** of a relationship between two or more variables; the type of relationship is assumed to be either linear or curvilinear. **Regression** analysis provides a means to determine the **type** (i.e., linear or curvilinear) of relationship between two or more variables, as well as the **direction** of this relationship. Regression also provides an indirect method of determining the strength of this relationship. Therefore, they have what some refer to as a synergistic relationship.

When examining the relationship between **two** variables, we conceptualize one of them as being "dependent" upon the behavior of the other. Typically, there is a temporal element associated with these relationships, such as the one that occurs first time-wise is usually regarded as the "independent" or predictor variable, while the other one (which occurs subsequently) is regarded as the "dependent" or criterion variable. For example, if we were investigating the relationship between income and consumption (spending), we would conceptualize one of these as "dependent" on the other. I am sure that we all have relatives and friends who have very exorbitant spending habits, and then determine that they now need an income in order to take care of "their business." However, in a typical, healthy situation, one usually has an income **prior** to spending or consumption. Therefore, in this case, income is conceptualized as the predictor variable, while consumption is the criterion variable.

Simple vs. Multiple Correlation and Regression Analyses

When there are only **two** variables involved in the design (i.e., **one predictor and one criterion variable**), this is considered a **simple correlation or regression design. Multiple correlation and regression designs are typified by more than one predictor variable and one criterion variable.** There are many similarities between simple and multiple correlation and regression, yet, as one might guess, there are some notable differences between the two approaches. In the next installment, a detailed analysis of these two designs will be examined more fully.

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Getting More Out of Writing Assignments By Carol T. Fletcher

Did you ever have a sinking feeling, as you graded a paper, that you were putting more time into your comments than the student put into writing the piece?

Every professor knows that the mere act of assigning a paper does not ensure that students will think critically about a topic, any more than requiring revisions necessarily leads to substantial improvements.

The problem is often that students simply do not understand the type of critical thinking their professor expects from an assignment, or how to go about such analysis.

Philosophy professor Kathleen Wallace and Jennifer Rich, English, rhetoric and composition professor, have tried to address the problem head on. They have developed what Wallace termed "front loaded assignments" -- that is, spelling out at the onset the specific thinking skills students are expected to bring to bear on the assignment.

Wallace and Rich, who teach together in the same First-Year Connections (FYC) cluster, presented their ideas at an October CTSE panel discussion on "Writing to Learn: Connecting the Thinking and Writing Process."

"We've been interested in this idea of how to use writing as a way of helping students acquire thinking skills," says Wallace. "In many cases, we've discovered that students have trouble thinking assignments through intellectually, whether it's an argument or something even more straightforward such as reading and following a passage."

Guided thinking

As Rich pointed out, suppose, for example, that students are asked to explain the notion, "Ignorance is bliss," in Plato's "Allegory of the Cave." *Explain* may not have a specific meaning to students, in terms of what thinking skills they need to bring to bear on the task. "I think that the most successful assignments decode for the student what is required," says Rich. "They make visible the thinking processes that we want them to do." If you, as the professor, have an argument in mind as you make up an assignment, Rich says, share it with your students. "This doesn't give them the easy way out," she contends. "It gets them to think more."

For instance, when Wallace asks students to analyze Socrates' contention, "A horse breeder is to horses as an educator is to students," she provides a lengthy set of questions to guide their thinking. *What analogy is being made? What is the strength of the similarity? Why does Socrates use this analogy to advance his argument against the charge that he corrupts youth?*

Rich and Wallace coordinate some of their assignments in the FYC cluster. After students have practiced some types of critical thinking in Rich's class, Wallace incorporates the same categories of thinking into her philosophy quizzes. Each question or group of questions begins with an explicit statement about the type of thinking that is expected. A question that asks students to explain a quote from Socrates, for instance, might be prefaced with the advice: "In the following question, demonstrate your understanding of an argument by summarizing or paraphrasing."

Practicing thinking skills continues after quizzes are handed back. If students miss any T/F or multiple choice questions, they write a paragraph about why their answer was wrong. "This becomes a learning tool," says Wallace. "And it also diffuses students' anger about not doing well."

Professors from across campus share ideas on how to inspire more critical thinking in writing assignments at a CTSE-sponsored panel discussion led by Professors Jennifer Rich and Kathleen Wallace.

Photos credit: Jacqueline Hlavenka

Education In Peace Building *(continued from cover page)*

Since 1974, a U.N. buffer zone has divided the Greeks in the south of Cyprus from the Turks in the north, blocking any meaningful contact between the two communities.

Among many divisive outcomes, this schism has meant that the children of Cyprus are educated in segregated, single-identity environments (i.e., either TC or GC) where they come into contact only with "their own," where their classmates and teachers all come from the same cultural background, and where they are exposed exclusively to ethnocentric versions of history and national identity. Here, as in other divided societies, the educational system influences how identity-based conflict is understood and addressed; as such, schools in these regions typically serve to strengthen the historical narrative of division. Greek Cypriot sociologist Maria Hadjipavlou-Trigeorgis has argued that the educational system in Cyprus has played a role in sustaining and perpetuating the conflict. Students are socialized into the conflict not only by the texts they are given to study and the ethnocentric tenets taught in the classroom, but also by ongoing exposure to a "hidden curriculum" that silently speaks to the distrust of "the other."

In spite of the partial lifting of the borders in 2003 and the subsequent passing of many thousands back and forth north to south since that time, most school children in Cyprus have never interacted with individuals from "the other side." For Cypriot youth, this means they are left believing only what it is they are taught to believe. In their schools, hostility and mistrust toward "the other" continue to be reinforced. As a result of the deeply entrenched ethno-political hostilities that pervade this island, neither community has even conceptualized the notion of pursuing conflict resolution education in their schools, largely because of the concerns that this might legitimate the position of "the other."

One of the pioneering efforts I undertook was to develop and pilot a postgraduate course for teachers and counselors titled "Conflict & Cooperation" at the University of Cyprus (UCY). In this course, students first explored the psychosocial dimensions of international conflict and then tried to apply these to interpersonal conflicts. It was amazing for me to see these students come to understand, for the first time, how the psychological principles of international conflict apply to their own country's situation and, most importantly, to their own lives! Despite the anticipated risk entailed in exploring these issues within the GC community, the student feedback from this course was remarkably receptive. I will be returning to Cyprus in 2007 to train other faculty in the instruction of the course.

Similarly, I conducted research with teachers and counselors at the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus and developed a course titled "Conflict Transformation in the Schools," which I taught to in-service teachers and counselors. A significant part of conflict transformation work involves teaching the skill of empathy -- promoting the ability in individuals to understand things from the point of view of the other. Empathy is not easy to teach, and it is even harder to learn, but it is essential to master if parties in conflict are ever to get beyond zero-sum outcomes. Conflicts can only be resolved when individuals are able to move beyond their own perspectives and attempt to understand what might be going on for the other party. I recall one of the Greek Cypriot teachers I taught in this class who provided a brilliant illustration of empathy-building. One day, after weeks of practicing the skill of empathic thinking in class, he proclaimed aloud that he had realized, to his own amazement, that he was able to empathize with "the other"! A week earlier, the Turkish air force had shot down Greek pilots over Turkey's "no-fly zone," an international crisis that had been vehemently condemned in the Greek media. The teacher shared with the class how he had actually stopped to think about the thoughts and the feelings of the Turkish air force pilots; he could not believe that for the first time in his life he had thought about what might be going on for the "Turks," the fears they were probably experiencing in relation to the sense of being attacked by their enemy. Previous to this, he said his only thought would have been against Turkey as "the aggressor nation." While this may not appear to be earth-shattering to others, it was eminently clear to me that this grown man had developed the ability to empathize, to come to understand the possible perspective of "the other" – his historic enemy!

During my leave, I also worked with a few local schools on both sides of the green line to develop peace-building initiatives within their schools. Perhaps my greatest challenge, and most rewarding venture, was working with The English School in Nicosia, the only planned bi-communal school in Cyprus where both TC and GC students are enrolled. It was only two years ago at the partial lifting of the borders that this school reopened its doors to enroll Turkish Cypriot students again, after a 30-year post-war hiatus; as one might imagine, the school was experiencing considerable difficulty in making this transition in ways that would provide mutual understanding and respect across both traditions. Reports of racist violence and intolerance occurring at the school were making the local media headlines. As it turned out, I was in the right place at the right time! Most of my energy here has been spent working with the school's administration and faculty to form an Advisory Council, composed of representatives from all the major stakeholder groups in the school community (including parents, alumni and students, TC and GC). The council is developing and implementing a "road map" to guide the school over the next three years in an overall initiative to promote tolerance and interdependence across the school community. The council met weekly and made significant advances over the six months I was there: a student attitude survey was conducted; a school mission statement underscoring a bi-communal ethos was developed, as was a code of conduct for students and one for teachers; an anti-discrimination policy was being shaped; and anti-discrimination training was conducted for all faculty and managers. The next step for this brave school will be an ambitious plan of student, parent and staff training to foster intercultural understanding. I continue to serve as outside consultant to the Advisory Council as it proceeds in its work. Although not without difficulties, this school has made incredible progress and, in my estimation, its efforts serve as an exemplar in peace building in Cyprus and in other divided societies -- an encouraging example of how local energy can be harnessed to promote peace.

Within the Turkish community in the north of Cyprus, my efforts have focused on working with the education ministry authorities to institute a "train-the-trainers" initiative. In 2007 I will train 30 teachers and school

psychologists from 15 schools in peace-building education principles and practices. Again, any systemic change will be a major advance in a system where nothing remotely related to peace education has ever been attempted in the schools! I also worked with a number of community-based NGOs, including a community counseling agency and the Mediation Association in North Old Nicosia, where again my work was focused on "training-the-trainers" in conflict transformation principles and mediation techniques.

In the end, my work underscores the belief that schools and community grass-roots groups can serve as powerful vehicles for peace building. Old narratives can be deconstructed and new perspectives shaped to move toward mutual understanding and reconciliation in conflict-ridden areas. While it is obvious that schools cannot prevent future conflict or eradicate past grievances, more attention is now being paid around the globe to the means by which education can serve a social reconstruction role in broken nations. As we say in Cyprus … "slowly, slowly."

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Workshops *(continued from 9)*

Writing as a process

For longer papers, Rich again gives students a series of questions that help guide them in producing an analysis. If students are asked to analyze an advertisement, for instance, she might offer such questions as: *How does the advertisement depend on stereotypes of masculinity and femininity? How does it represent race and class? Why is the model looking directly at the camera? What type of relationship is the model trying to create with the presumed audience?*

Guided by such questions, students begin pre-writing their papers. Rich reads the pre-writing and responds, dialoging with students in the margins about their ideas. Students then write their papers. Rich responds again, and students write revisions.

The quality of comments is important: "Instead of diagnosing a problem, you have to give them a cure," says Rich. "You have to ask specific enough questions on content and writing to enable real revisions." A vague comment like, "awkward," says Rich, is useless because students don't know how to respond. "The time-saving stuff ends up being time consuming because you end up getting nothing in return," she says.

Once FYC students have analyzed an ad in Rich's class, Wallace has them consider the advertisement in the context of Plato's contention that poets should be eliminated from an ideal state because they are illusion makers. Are advertisers the illusion makers of today? "I want students to be able to develop higher level thinking," says Wallace. "Not just to regurgitate Plato but to synthesize his ideas, pick out what is relevant, and apply them to something that on the face of it has nothing to do with Plato."

The time problem

Since Wallace teaches classes with 35 students, allowing students to revise papers over and over again is just impractical. "Instead of having students revise," she says, "I've tried to construct the writing assignments in such a structured way that students will write something coherent the first time around."

Still, the sort of exercises Wallace and Rich promote – exercises that guide students in the process of critical thinking and provide intensive feedback from instructors along the way – are time consuming. "Content in the course can suffer," concedes Wallace. "You might not cover as much material in a philosophy class as you once did, but over the years I guess I've decided it is a worthwhile tradeoff."

Panel participant Tom Couser, from the English Department, agreed that the depth of critical thinking is ultimately more rewarding than the breadth of content. "The more I teach," he says, "the less I teach."

Combating the all-nighter mentality

The panel was attended by professors from across the University. Many were struck by the common challenges faced by faculty teaching writing across disciplines. Panelists suggested other ideas for teaching critical thinking through writing, including:

- Rather than allowing revisions after grading, which too often results in perfunctory rewrites by students scrambling for better grades, Tom Couser allows students to e-mail drafts to him any time up to 24 hours before the final copy is due. He responds, by e-mail, to the content of the piece, sometimes giving students a few extra days to write if he is suggesting major changes.

- Susan Lorde Martin, a professor of legal studies in business, sometimes teaches a class too large for mandatory papers. Instead, she gives a large grade incentive for students who choose to write an optional paper. She works with these students one-on-one for the entire semester on a substantial piece of analysis, allowing as many revisions as the student needs. If a paper earns a B+ or better, it replaces the student's lowest test grade.

- Paul Glassman, assistant dean in the University Library, encourages faculty to add a research component to writing assignments; this provides a terrific opportunity for library staff to work with students, showing them how to identify research needs, locate information and evaluate the quality of sources.

- In some classes, English Professor John Bryant grades student papers, but returns the papers to students with comments but no grades. He then tells students his criteria for grading and asks them to grade their own papers. Students are usually accurate to within a third of a point. "It teaches students to be self-analyzing," Bryant says.

- Bryant also insists that students do five days of pre-writing before they actually begin a paper. This allows students the leisure to develop their thoughts and teaches them that thinking takes time. Each day in class, they discuss how the pre-writing is going. "I've done this for a number of years," he says, "and it gets results."

As Poynter Institute senior scholar Roy Peter Clark has put it, we have to teach students to acquire the habits of a writer and not only the skills.

What we need to overcome, says Rich, "is this notion that writing occurs at four in the morning and that's it."

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