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Hofstra at Home and Abroad

On Foreign Turf, Be Prepared to Be Surprised

by STEVEN KNOWLTON

Faculty members who find teaching and research to be second nature on their home turf can run into serious tangles when they take their skills overseas and run into different cultural values, an internationally known journalism educator and consultant told a group of Hofstra faculty in April. To make the most of their travels, they should give some thought to the problems they may run into before they pack up for guest lectures, sabbaticals or fellowships with foreign hosts.

Conversations in other lands may sound perfectly normal but be anything but, said Ann Olson, who spoke April 18 at a lecture sponsored by the Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence. "What people actually mean may be very different," she warned. "What is blue over here may not be what is blue over there."

It looks like an ordinary stand-up, a reporter asking questions, a politician answering. But overseas, as here in Moldova, where the major television station is run by the state and the Community Party runs the government, questions, answers and audience understanding are entirely different from what Americans expect.

Ann Olson is an expert on conducting workshops and giving lectures abroad.

The initial tendency, she said, is to assume "that other people far away are like us, feel like us. But sometimes the local prism can entirely turn on their heads things you would expect to be otherwise."

For example, a major problem in many teaching venues overseas, she said, is the question of plagiarism or academic honesty. When she was teaching journalism in Botswana, she said, she encountered a deeply rooted system of "riders and drivers." Those who could provide help, the drivers, were obliged to provide it to those who needed it, the riders. So while the students agreed, in principle, that honesty might be an important value, the students were bewildered that copying other students' work was considered dishonest. "The notion of plagiarism was a difficult one for them to grasp," Ms. Olson said. "As they saw it, they were helping their friends, one of their important tribal values."

She also cautioned that students in many parts of the world revered their professors far more than is common in the United States. As a result, the faculty who like to encourage classroom discussion and debate are frequently disappointed by

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Moving From Inspiration to Publication

By STANISLAO G. PUGLIESE

In the fall 2006 issue of the CTSE Newsletter, I wrote about the "publish or perish" dictum of our profession. Junior scholars are understandably anxious about their prospects for tenure when they are told by senior colleagues that – even at less prestigious universities – a monograph is necessary for acceptance into that tenured guild (or gild?) of the academy. How, they wonder, should they go about finding a publisher?

Junior faculty – and the administration – should be aware, as I wrote last time, that "we 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 (profits and loss) statements, and marketing 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.

Here I would like to expand on those earlier comments by offering specific advice on how to approach a potential publisher with a book project. But after meeting with colleagues in other disciplines, I must qualify this advice by pointing out that it may not be applicable to all book proposals: I come from a publishing and editing background in (broadly) the humanities, and more specifically history.

So let's say you have finally finished a manuscript, or have a good idea for one, and you wish to seek out publishers. What's the first step? One tried-and-true answer is to turn to your dissertation adviser (more than one has been selected solely for connections to editors). A high-powered adviser can often get your revised manuscript past the slush pile.

Often we don't realize that a good answer to that question is right in front of us – or, more precisely, in the back of our manuscript, in the bibliography. In your reading, research, and scholarship, pay attention when you come across the same publishing houses over and over again. And to the acknowledgments of scholarly books, where a researcher will often thank a particular editor. Many academic publishing houses today have impressive series devoted to specific area studies. Look for one where your topic would fit in.

Visit a prospective publisher's Web site. Except for the very elite literary firms, who are usually approached through agents, most publishers offer guidelines on proposing a book manuscript. If you think you have a potential blockbuster on your hands, such as the next "Da Vinci Code" or "Closing of the American Mind," it may be a good idea to secure the services of an agent (I know a few excellent ones), but for the most part, our work will eventually reach the right house and editor without an agent who acts as a midwife. In the same way you did research on Hofstra University and your future colleagues before your job interview, study a publishing house's editorial program and editors. Learn what they publish.

What should a proposal look like? One thing to keep in mind is that editors are extraordinarily busy. In addition to the vast amount of reading they need to do to evaluate manuscripts, they read to keep abreast of their field and, hard to believe, even for pleasure. Do not send a complete manuscript unless asked to do so. Send a proposal only to those houses that have published related material: if Oxford University Press says it doesn't publish poetry, there is no reason for you to think it will publish your verses, even if you are the next T.S. Eliot.

Compose a cover letter that will catch the eye and interest of an editor or (at the larger houses) an editorial assistant, and include a complete, updated curriculum vitae. Give serious consideration to your title and subtitle. Spend time on crafting a concise, accurate, and riveting brief description of your book. If you can't explain your book in one paragraph, there's a problem. What are its core themes, arguments, issues, and/or topics? What are the distinctive and original elements of your project that set it apart from other work in the field?

This should be followed by a more detailed description: elaborate on the core argument(s) and goal(s) of the proposed book. What questions do you seek to answer? What do you believe will be the book's contribution to the literature in its field?

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Offer a table of contents and outlines of the proposed chapters. Each chapter should have a brief description (100 words or so). Try to suggest a unifying thread or a conceptual framework to tie the work together. Editors will usually be willing to read an introduction and a sample chapter.

To assess the project's potential accurately, the acquisitions editor will need to know how your work fits into the field or how it radically challenges accepted paradigms. Are there works already in print that are similar? How does your work differ? Be specific here. What sets your book apart from these titles and would persuade potential readers to buy it?

Since even university presses must now consider the bottom line, think about the market for the book. Is it primarily for scholars in your field, or might it be used as a classroom text? Would it be a required text or supplementary reading? In which courses might your book be used? Name names: Professors XYZ at University X and the College of Z have indicated that they might consider using your book in courses they teach. List any secondary markets that may exist for the book (i.e., the library market, academic associations, etc.).

Don't overlook the technical matters. What is the expected length of the manuscript? Will there be pictures, tables, or other non-text material, and, if so, approximately how many of each type? Are there any other particular features planned for the book, such as boxed text, a glossary, activities, study questions, an instructor's guide, etc.? Is the manuscript complete? If not, what is your expected date of completion? If you know of potential readers who might offer an objective assessment of the manuscript, list their names, affiliations and contact information. Will there be illustrations? If so, are they in color, or black and white?

Have you explored the possibility of raising funds to defray the cost of illustrations, the book cover, indexing or marketing? (Such funding does exist.) If you can mention that the Society for the Study of Medieval Tapestries will contribute even $500 to pay for the color reproduction on the cover, that offer might actually make the difference between a book's making its way to library shelves or not.

Finally, understand that decisions take time. If an editor is interested, he or she will let you know and will ask for a complete manuscript, then will send copies to at least two outside readers (every house has a stable of academic specialists who fulfill this critical task) and wait for their reports. Be warned: this may take several months.

Once the editor has the readers' reports in hand, the names of the readers will be stripped out and the reports will be sent to you for a reply. If the readers concur that this is an excellent piece of scholarship that merits publication, the major hurdle has been overcome. But it's more likely that one or both readers will suggest revisions before publication, and the editor will invite your response.

This is a critical moment in the proceedings: a defensive letter written in a tone of moral outrage ("How could those two idiots not recognize my brilliance!?") will surely sink the project. A close, careful reading of the reports and a reasoned response – accepting valid criticism in some places and defending points in others – will be far more likely to win over an editor.

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.

Talk of Sorrow, Then Talk of Safety Nets

By STEVEN R. KNOWLTON

The massacre at Virginia Tech on April 16 is having an unsettling effect across the Hofstra campus and on college campuses all across the country, according to Hofstra's director of student counseling, Dr. John Guthman.

With a spasm of violence on any college campus, "we realize how vulnerable we all are," Dr. Guthman said. "We realize that tragedy is sometimes indiscriminate. And then we say: 'Wow. This could have been me.' "

In the days immediately following the shootings, Dr. Guthman said, calls to the counseling center indicated that many students here were "very emotionally connected" to the massacre, in which a troubled Virginia Tech student shot to death 32 people on the campus and then killed himself.

Dr. Guthman asked all faculty members to watch their students for signs of serious emotional distress, which often include changes in memory, comprehension, and concentration. The faculty have a unique vantage point to look for these signs, he explained. They see students several times a week and are always looking for this sort of higher-level brain function. And students are usually closer to their professors than to any other adults on a campus.

"Faculty reveal a great deal of ourselves to students when we teach," Dr. Guthman said.

Faculty with concerns about any student are asked to call the counseling center at (516) 463-6791. The phone is staffed 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. on Saturday. At other hours, the line rings through to Public Safety, which can put callers in touch with a 24-hour emergency counseling team, Dr. Guthman said.

Particularly with the stress of the end of the semester, students may start showing abrupt changes in attendance or in the quality of their classwork. Any faculty member who is worried about a student's behavior "should reach out to us," Dr. Guthman said. "We can outreach to students, sometimes casually and informally." The outreach can sometimes be more insistent, he said, depending on how urgent the matter seems to be.

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

A Simple Way to Track Attendance? Absent

By STEVEN R. KNOWLTON

It's an elemental question, really: Who was where and when? And for academic eons, college faculty members who were asked that question about the students enrolled in their classes answered it as they saw fit.

A college teacher has many choices: Call the roll? Pass around a sign-in sheet? Give up and let students come to class when and if they please? Hofstra doesn't have a university-wide attendance policy, and leaves faculty free, for the most part, to do as they see fit.

Mostly.

The exception – and it is a significant one – comes twice a semester, when Last Date of Attendance rosters are distributed to faculty mailboxes. With these LDAs, the Academic Records Office asks who has stopped coming to class and when was the last time the AWOL students showed up.

Teri A. Cox, assistant director of Academic Records, sends out LDA sheets in the fourth and 10th weeks of each semester, asking for information that only good attendance-takers can provide. Ms. Cox acknowledges, "This can be a big problem with large classes."

Still, the federal government and a number of campus administrators want this information. The federal government demands the information about attendance, said Dr. Gertrude M. Cucciniello, dean of Academic Records, because it seeks refunds for any federal grants or loans made for students who have stopped attending. Additionally, academic advisement, the athletic department and other campus groups ask for this information so they can reach out to students who are not coming to class.

Since some people want the information and the federal government demands it, Ms. Cox sends out colored roster sheets twice each term. And no, they are not color-coded. "We ask the guys in the print shop what they have plenty of," she explained, "so whatever color we choose that time around, all faculty will get the same color."

Aided by e-mail reminders from the provost's office, the return rate for LDAs is up to about 80 percent, Ms. Cox said. She follows up with personal e-mail and phone calls to faculty members who don't return the rosters.

Surely, you think, technology can solve all attendance-record problems.

Think again.

Can't technology help?

The short answer: no. The slightly more nuanced answer: not yet, anyway, and not at a reasonable price.

Dr. Cucciniello said she and other administrators always looked around for promising technology when they attended registrars' conferences. "There are sessions at these conferences all the time," she said, "but nobody's come up with a good solution."

SunGard, the technology firm that makes the Banner software system, which is in use at Hofstra and many other universities, "is certainly aware" of the attendance problem, Ms. Cox said, but has no easy solution.

There was a flurry of e-mail chatter on the question this spring, about the time Ms. Cox sent out her 10th-week roster sheets. Some faculty suggested an electronic recording system that would have students record their presence in a classroom by using a card-swipe system; such systems are already in place in many classrooms. But most classrooms don't have them, and even for those that do, when one student opens a door with a card just before the start of class, many students file through the opened door without swiping their cards to announce their presence. Others thought the university might buy recording devices for each classroom – essentially electronic sign-in sheets – but that was considered prohibitively expensive.

The University Senate's Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee even took up the issue last year, said the committee chair, Dr. Gregory Maney. Maney said a leading suggestion was for expanding the card-swipe system campus wide. The matter went to the full faculty as an information item in December 2006, but it ran into opposition from faculty "who thought it was kind of Big Brotherish," Maney said. "Some thought it would have a negative effect on classroom environments." The question is now before the chairs' caucus, he said.

For many Hofstra classes, keeping track of students is easy because there aren't too many of them to make keeping track of them a chore. Finding a way to keep track of large classes with a simple but secure system would be welcomed by many teachers.

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

CTSE Survey: Ways to Prevent Plagiarism

By MARK McEVOY

Earlier this semester, the Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence asked Hofstra faculty members to complete an online survey designed to uncover which anti-plagiarism strategies were being used at Hofstra, and how effective faculty members found these strategies to be. There were 135 responses. The results, which are summarized below, make for interesting reading. Note that the survey does not measure the actual effectiveness of strategies, only their perceived effectiveness, as estimated by the faculty members using them. The idea is that in the absence of an objective measure of effectiveness, one useful way to choose anti-plagiarism strategies is to ask those who use them how effective they seem to be.

The first question asked respondents to indicate how many cases of plagiarism they detected in Fall 2006. This question was answered by 123 respondents, who reported a total of 128 cases of plagiarism, or slightly more than one case per respondent. (To see the glass as half-full, though, you should note that almost half of all respondents reported no cases for Fall 2006.)

59 (48%) reported no cases.*

33 (27%) reported 1 case.

15 (12%) reported 2 cases.

7 (6%) reported 3 cases.

4 (3%) reported 4 cases.

3 (2%) reported 5 cases.

1 (1%) reported 6 cases.

1 (1%) reported 7 cases.

The second question listed a variety of plagiarism prevention strategies, and asked respondents to say if they used each strategy and, if so, to rate its effectiveness.

Sixty-four respondents required students to submit assignments to Turnitin.com.

2 (3%) rated this strategy as ineffective.

21 (32%) rated this strategy as moderately effective.

41 (64%) rated this strategy as very effective.

Fifty-two respondents submitted individual papers to Turnitin.com when suspicious.

7 (13%) rated this strategy as ineffective.

23 (44%) rated this strategy as moderately effective.

22 (42%) rated this strategy as very effective.

Fifty-three respondents included on assignment sheets an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism and how it is penalized at Hofstra.

15 (28%) rated this strategy as ineffective

23 (43%) rated this strategy as moderately effective.

15 (28%) rated this strategy as very effective.

Ninety-six respondents included on the course syllabus an explanation of what constitutes plagiarism and how it is penalized at Hofstra.

23 (24%) rated this strategy as ineffective

42 (44%) rated this strategy as moderately effective.

31 (32%) rated this strategy as very effective.

Ninety-one respondents assigned exercises designed to minimize the possibility of plagiarized assignments.

2 (2%) rated this strategy as ineffective.

40 (44%) rated this strategy as moderately effective.

49 (54%) rated this strategy as very effective.

Thus, the two strategies rated most effective by respondents were designing assignments to minimize the chances of plagiarism, and requiring all papers to be submitted to Turnitin.com.

The CTSE will follow up with e-mail summarizing these results and summarizing the various other strategies listed by respondents.

Mark McEvoy is an Assistant Professor of Philosophy and a member of CTSE.

** All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, and so totals will not always add up to 100%. Percentages for question one are based on the number of respondents to the question; percentages for question two are based on the number of respondents who reported using a given strategy.*

Alternatives to Lecture by BRUCE TORFF

Letting the Data (and the Students) Do the Talking

In this series, I am suggesting ways for students to connect with the content they need to know without listening to extended lectures from the professor. Along the way I've been advocating a three-part strategy:

Start by creating a handout that has lots of content, but not so much as to be impractical in the time allotted – say, one to four pages.

Create a second handout that gives students questions to answer or problems to solve – a classroom activity that requires them to think critically, not just repeat information.

Have a classroom conversation in which the students' responses to the activity are discussed and the professor delivers "minilectures."

You can tell students what you want them to learn. Or you can let them figure that out – and remember it.

Let's take another stab at this approach. In many disciplines, researchers have a great deal of quantitative data. Why not put these data to work in our classes?

Suppose, for example, you have a marketing class focused on how target markets are identified and then reached through advertising. Prepare a content-rich handout in the form of a data table. The table supplies a great deal of information: the names of several heavily advertised products; annual sales for each product in a given year; expenditures on advertising in that year; expenditures on print, radio, television, and Internet advertising, in separate columns; and a list of the publications, media outlets or programs, and Web sites chosen for that advertising.

Now, what should you ask students to do with all this information? Prepare a second handout that includes several questions that require students to figure out what the table can tell them.

Some of these questions are simple, asking students to read the table: Which corporation spent the most on advertising, relative to total sales? To answer that, all the students need to do is a little arithmetic.

Other questions require students to consider the products' marketing strategies. Why was Product A advertised as it was? What market was it probably aimed at? Why were these advertising vehicles used?

Still other questions could be added to encourage students to frame problems and ask questions of their own. What additional information would you like to have seen in this table? What would such information allow you to determine? What makes this information relevant or valuable?

If you look at your lecture notes and books and distill out the points you need to emphasize, it's easy to write questions that lead to these points. ("Jeopardy" comes to mind.) On the activity handout, give students space to write down their answers. Their written work will provide the basis for the discussion that comes later.

In class, have students work individually, in pairs or in fours. Give them 15 or 20 minutes to answer the assigned questions. Walk around the room as the students work, keeping them on task and answering any questions they may have.

Alternatively, you can disseminate the two handouts in advance, perhaps using Blackboard, and ask students to prepare their responses on their own time. This can be especially useful with large classes, in which in-class work can be more difficult. (It is not impossible to have large classes do in-class work, though – give it a try sometime.)

After you put the class back into full-group mode, ask students for their responses to the assigned questions. It can be a good idea to "cold call" from time to time – i.e., to call on students who have not raised their hands. This keeps students on notice to contribute at any moment and prevents extroverts from squeezing introverts out of the discussion.

A useful slogan to remember is "ask before you tell." Ask students to respond to the questions before you put your two cents in. Ask them to elaborate on their responses when that's needed. Improvise questions and comments that clarify things.

Once students have done what they can with a question, add your remarks to ensure that the points you need to make are very clear. Sometimes that means restating what the students have appropriately contributed, and sometimes it means filling in spots where

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Having a Word with CAROL PORR

Everyone Open (*His/Her/Their/I Give Up*) Book

In a 2002 PSAT exam, the following statement appeared as part of the essay section, and it created a bit of a stir in some quarters of the academic community:

Toni Morrison's genius enables her to create novels that arise from and express the injustice African Americans have endured.

While a construction like this one went unnoticed by the people who prepared the exam, there was an outcry from the grammar police, and perhaps from the people who read William Safire's "On Language" column, which appears weekly in The New York Times. The pronoun *her* has no true antecedent. The reader assumes that *her* refers to *Toni Morrison's*, but the possessive form of a noun is technically an adjective and therefore cannot serve as the antecedent of a pronoun. While this is an extreme case of grammar snobbery, it does illustrate an example of what we call "improper reference of pronouns," the topic I've chosen for this issue.

Let's talk about pronouns. The pronoun (from the Latin *pro*, for, and *nomen*, name) is the part of speech that is used either in place of a noun, or that refers to a noun already mentioned, which is called its **antecedent.** Everyone is familiar with the personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, etc.), but the indefinite pronouns (each, every, anyone, everyone, everybody, etc.) can cause a bit of trouble with agreement because, whether they act as nouns or adjectives, they refer to multitudes but are often singular in construction. The rule is that pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number. In addition, the word to which a pronoun refers should always be clear to the reader; that is, a pronoun and its antecedent should be instantly recognized as belonging together.

First, let's tackle the question of agreement with regard to person and number. Singular antecedents require singular pronouns, as in:

Each girl has *her* own car.

A sentence like that is easy enough. What if, however, we have a sentence that reads like this:

When someone has been drinking, ___ should not drive.

This last sentence illustrates a current usage dilemma, which is prompted by the fact that English has no third person singular form of the personal pronoun that refers to people of either sex. Of course, when I was in school, lo those many years ago, the writer simply went with the male version of the personal pronoun: *he*. We've come a long way, baby, and as a result, the writer has a conundrum: wing it and use the masculine singular (a use that can be considered sexist); use *he or she*, even though such expressions can be awkward; or go with the very popular plural *they*? The first two choices are the grammatically correct ones; the third choice is most definitely used informally, but is still considered incorrect by grammar purists.

In cases like the above, it's often easier to make the antecedent plural, as in:

When *drivers* have been drinking, *they* should not drive.

Or the sentence could be rewritten so there is no problem with agreement:

A driver who has been drinking should not be behind the wheel of a car.

With regard to this particular agreement problem, Ben Yagoda, the author of the recently published "When You Catch an Adjective, Kill It," notes that there are a number of examples of the plurals *they*, *their*, and *them* being connected to indefinite pronoun antecedents in texts before the 18th century. He quotes from no less than Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" ("God send every one *their* heart's desire!") and The King James Bible ("In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than *themselves*"). As we moved into the 18th and 19th centuries, grammarians became more insistent on this particular kind of agreement. So who is going to tell Sting that the line in his song "If you love someone, set *them* free" contains faulty grammar?

Intervening Antecedents

The personal pronouns should have definite antecedents and should be placed as near as possible to their antecedents. Your readers should not have to look through several sentences to find a pronoun's antecedent, nor should they have to manufacture an antecedent for a pronoun. Here's an example of an unclear antecedent that I culled from a book called "Grammatically Correct":

Keep the medicine stored at room temperature. A special bottle is provided. If it is exposed to extremes in temperatures, its potency could be lessened.

Clearly the writer meant to warn the reader that the medicine's potency could be lessened, not the bottle's, but since the pronoun *it* is closer to the noun *bottle*, the reader automatically assumes that the pronoun refers to *bottle*. What the writer needs to do is repeat the noun to which the pronoun refers:

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From the Director

To Teach Integrity, Keep It Front and Center

Dear Colleagues,

Reflecting a concern of many of us, the Center for Teaching and Scholarly Excellence has had several programs on enhancing a culture of academic integrity on campus. Three years ago Don McCabe, a professor of organization management at Rutgers University and the founding president of the Center for Academic Integrity at Duke University, spoke to the faculty. Last semester, several faculty workshops were organized by David Callahan, the author of "The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead" and the founder of the Demos think tank. Elsewhere in this newsletter, you have a preliminary report by Mark McEvoy, a CTSE member, on a survey he conducted on methods for combating student plagiarism.

CTSE members plan to continue working on this subject. I hope that many of you will share your thoughts and best practices for developing a culture of academic integrity in our classrooms. I recommend the Web site of the Center for Academic Integrity (www.academicintegrity.org) for ideas for your individual classrooms and for model codes that are used university-wide on other campuses. On the Web site you will also find Ten Principles of Academic Integrity, written by Don McCabe and Gary Pavela. The most recent update of the principles appeared in Change magazine, published by Heldref Publications. With the permission of the authors and the publisher, I quote the principles here for your consideration.

If you come with a new way to encourage academic honesty, CTSE would like to hear it.

1. Affirm the importance of academic integrity.
Institutions of higher education are dedicated to the pursuit of truth. Faculty members need to affirm that the pursuit of truth is grounded in certain core values, including diligence, civility, and honesty.

2. Foster a love of learning.
A commitment to academic integrity is reinforced by high academic standards. Most students will thrive in an atmosphere where academic work is seen as challenging, relevant, useful, and fair.

3. Treat students as ends in themselves.
Faculty members should treat their students as ends in themselves – deserving individual attention and consideration. Students will generally reciprocate by respecting the best values of their teachers, including a commitment to academic integrity.

4. Promote an environment of trust in the classroom.
Most students are mature adults, and value an environment free of arbitrary rules and trivial assignments, where trust is earned, and given.

5. Encourage student responsibility for academic integrity.
With proper guidance, students can be given significant responsibility to help protect and promote the highest standards of academic integrity. Students want to work in communities where competition is fair, integrity is respected, and cheating is punished. They understand that one of the greatest inducements to engaging in academic dishonesty is the perception that academic dishonesty is rampant.

6. Clarify expectations for students.
Faculty members have primary responsibility for designing and cultivating the educational environment and experience. They must clarify their expectations in advance regarding honesty in academic work, including the nature and scope of student collaboration. Most students want such guidance, and welcome it in course syllabi, carefully reviewed by their teachers in class.

7. Develop fair and relevant forms of assessment.
Students expect their academic work to be fairly and fully assessed. Faculty members should use – and continuously revise – forms of assessment that require active and creative thought, and promote learning opportunities for students.

8. Reduce opportunities to engage in academic dishonesty.
Prevention is a critical line of defense against academic dishonesty. Students should not be tempted or induced to engage in acts of academic dishonesty by ambiguous policies, undefined or unrealistic standards for collaboration, inadequate classroom management, or poor examination security.

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Alternatives to Lecture

Letting the Data (and the Students) Do the Talking

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students stopped short or went awry. Try to limit your remarks to three minutes or so – delivering several minilectures in a class period allows you to add lots of content without overdoing it.

And so the discussion cycles: the professor asks students for their answers to one of the assigned questions, students talk about what they wrote, the professor moderates a class discussion and possibly adds a minilecture, and then the professor moves on to the next question.

In this sample lesson, a data table has been used to help students learn about marketing. But this three-part strategy can be applied in any discipline. Instead of a data table, you could use a few pages of text, a database, or whatever your subject area seems to need.

This kind of teaching takes students where you want them to go, but they get there in the driver's seat, not the back seat.

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.

Sometimes, you just have to go outside, as on a beautiful day in spring when philosophy instructor John McGuire took his Phil 14 students onto the lawn in front of Barnard Hall for a discussion of Kant and the Categorical Imperative.

From the Director

To Teach Integrity, Keep It Front and Center

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9. Challenge academic dishonesty when it occurs.
Students observe how faculty members behave, and what values they embrace. Faculty members who ignore or trivialize academic dishonesty send the message that the core values of academic life, and community life in general, are not worth any significant effort to enforce.

10. Help define and support campus-wide academic integrity standards.
Acts of academic dishonesty by individual students can occur across artificial divisions of departments and schools. Although faculty members should be the primary role models for academic integrity, responsibility for defining, promoting, and protecting academic integrity must be a communitywide concern – not only to identify repeat offenders, and apply consistent due process procedures, but to affirm the shared values that make colleges and universities true communities.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and productive summer.

– Susan

Having a Word

Everyone Open (His/Her/Their/I Give Up) Book

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Keep the medicine stored at room temperature. A special bottle is provided. If the *medicine* is exposed to extremes in temperatures, *its* potency could be lessened.

Or the writer could move the intervening noun to a position in the writing where it won't cause confusion:

Keep the *medicine* stored at room temperature. If *it* is exposed to extremes in temperatures, *its* potency could be lessened. A special bottle is provided.

Another solution would be to enclose the reference to the problematic antecedent in parentheses. This action would effectively remove the confusion:

Keep the *medicine* stored at room temperature. (A special insulating container is provided.) If *it* is exposed to extremes in temperatures, *its* potency could be lessened.

Ambiguous Antecedents

Sometimes a sentence contains more than one word to which a pronoun could grammatically refer. Sentences like these should be written in such a way that there is no doubt about the antecedent to the pronoun:

Mary told her mother that *her* clothes were getting too tight.

I don't know whose pain I should feel in this sentence! If Mary told her father about the clothes, there would be no ambiguity, but with two females and too tight clothes, we don't know who should get bigger clothes or go on a diet. Correct a sentence like this by making the meaning clear:

Mary noticed that her clothes were getting too tight, and *she* complained about this situation to her mother.

Or:

Mary told her mother, "My clothes are getting too tight."

Or:

Mary told her mother that her (Mary's) clothes were getting too tight.

Here's another kind of ambiguity that occurs when a relative clause (an adjective clause introduced by one of the relative pronouns) is misplaced in a sentence:

The dog was hit by a car *that jumped over the fence.*

With the weather we've had lately, it may seem entirely possible that cars could jump fences. What we have here, however, is a clause that is modifying the wrong noun.

This situation is corrected by placing the clause directly after the noun to which it refers:

The dog *that jumped over the fence* was hit by a car.

Weak Reference

A pronoun should not refer to a word merely implied by its context, nor should it refer to a word used as a modifier (remember Toni Morrison and her genius).

Here is an example of a weak pronoun reference:

A blue car followed us closely, and *he* kept blinking his lights at us.

This sentence puts me in mind of the Stephen King novel "Christine," in which a car becomes human. Unless the writer of this sentence is Stephen King, the reference of this pronoun is too weak. *He* refers to no particular word. Here's an improved version:

A blue car followed us closely, and the driver kept blinking his lights at us.

Another example of a weak reference that even good writers often miss is this one:

My husband is a fanatic sports fan, and he wishes that I would become interested in *them.*

Them is referring to the adjective *sports*, not the noun *fan*. This construction is identical to the problematic PSAT statement about Toni Morrison, but the error here is a bit more obvious. While the word *sports* is usually a noun, in this case it's acting like an adjective. Pronouns stand in for or refer to nouns, not any other part of speech.

Here's a corrected version:

My husband is a fanatic sports fan, and he wishes that I would become interested in sports myself.

Broad Reference

The reader should know exactly what a pronoun stands for, and a pronoun should usually not refer broadly to the whole idea of the preceding clause. Here's an example of too broad a reference for a pronoun:

Only 10 students signed up for the workshop, *which* was due to poor publicity.

In this sentence it's difficult for the reader to determine exactly what the relative pronoun *which* refers to. Correct it by supplying a referent for the pronoun:

Only 10 students signed up for the workshop, and this disappointing turnout was due to poor publicity.

Better yet, you could also turn the *which* clause into a phrase:

Only 10 students signed up for the workshop *because of poor publicity.*

Sometimes the antecedent of the pronoun *which* is unclear, as in the following sentence:

The professor did not object to the student's insensitive remark, *which* surprised me.

In this case, the reader wouldn't be sure if the writer had been surprised by the student's remark or the fact that the professor didn't object. Here's a correct version:

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Hofstra at Home and Abroad

On Foreign Turf, Be Prepared to Be Surprised

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their efforts to draw out students' ideas. "A teacher is the supreme being in many cultures," Ms. Olson explained. "People do not question you. Rather, they want to please you."

Similarly, she added, students in many parts of the world grow up believing that education means "learning to listen and to memorize. They don't ask questions. And they will never do well if you grade them on class participation. They simply don't know how."

A corollary: "Yes can often mean no, especially with people from the East who don't want to lose face by saying no. You are a guest for them – or at the least an honored person – and they don't want to say no to you."

Sometimes, she said, when faculty trying to teach overseas come to see that things are so different, they get discouraged, believing that the cultural differences are so great they simply cannot be overcome. This is particularly true for the faculty members who are trying the hardest to be sensitive to cultural differences.

Ann Olson and CTSE Director Susan Lorde Martin talked about issues in international teaching.

But Ms. Olson cautioned: "Don't be silenced by feeling unable to bridge differences. Remember that usually you're there because someone needs what you know. Try to make it available to them."

She also cautioned that the ubiquity of the Internet in the United States does not mean that the rest of the world is equally wired. The results are that much of the world, particularly the parts where English is not widely spoken, has a seriously skewed view of Americans. What foreign students believe they know about Americans may have come from newscasts, feature films or many other sources, which are often neither reliable nor accurate.

Still, she said, most of the world is aware of American foreign policy, and many views are negative. But Ms. Olson said it was important to not be daunted: remember that "we are not our government. People understand that."

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Having a Word

Everyone Open *(His/Her/Their/I Give Up)* Book

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I was surprised that the professor didn't object to the student's insensitive remark.

There are some constructions that are acceptable in informal writing even though they are technically wrong:

The students laughed, *which* annoyed the professor.

In this instance, the students' laughing is what has annoyed the professor, and as you can see from this sentence, there is technically no antecedent for the relative pronoun *which*. But the meaning of the sentence is clear enough.

Some of the preceding errors are more egregious than others. I am constantly reminding my students that the study of grammar is rewarding, albeit sometimes quite frustrating. By sticking so vehemently to the rules, we run the risk of absurdity. Ben Yagoda points out the foolishness of adhering too strictly to some of these prescriptive rules. Sentences like "No person shall be forced to have an abortion against *his* will" and "Man, being a mammal, breast-feeds *his* young" are examples of impossible but grammatically correct constructions. They put one in mind of the famous quotation attributed to Winston Churchill, who, when corrected for violating the rule against ending a sentence with a preposition, retorted, "That is the sort of nonsense up with which I will not put!"

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